

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BUENOS 02303 292327Z

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ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20

USIA-15 OMB-01 AID-20 DRC-01 /117 W

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R 291913Z MAR 74

FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5878

INFO USCINCSO

C O N F I D E N T I A L BUENOS AIRES 2303

USCINCSO FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, AR

SUBJ: PERON MEETS WITH FREJULI LEADERS

1. SUMMARY: IN OBVIOUS FOLLOW-UP TO MEETING WITH LEADERS OPPOSITION PARTIES, PERON ON MAR 28 MET AND EXCHANGED VIEWS WITH LEADERS OF FREJULI PARTIES. THEY DIRECTED CONSTRUCTIVE CRITICISM AT SOME OF GOVERNMENT'S POLICIES. PERON AGREED TO CONTINUE MEETING WITH THEM AT LEAST ONCE EVERY MONTH. END SUMMARY.

2. PERON MET WITH LEADERS OF FREJULI PARTIES MAR 28 TO EX- CHANGE VIEWS ON CURRENT ECON-POLITICAL SITUATION. INTEREST- INTLY, IN OPENING REMARKS PERON REITERATED THESIS THAT NO SINGLE PERSON WOULD BE DESIGNATED AS HIS HEIR, RATHER, COUNTRY WOULD BE HEIR. HE ALSO INDICATED THERE WOULD BE CHANGES IN GOVERNMENT'S ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL POLICIES BEGINNING IN JUNE--THOUGH HE DID NOT SPECIFY WHAT THEY MIGHT ENTAIL.

3. SPEAKING FOR LEADERS OF MINORITY PARTIES, ARTURO FRONDIZI (MID) AFFIRMED THAT GOVT HAD INDEED PRODUCED POSITIVE ACCOMP- LISHMENT--E.G., THERE WAS NOW CONSENSUS AND DIALOGUE WHICH HAD NEVER EXISTED BEFORE. HOWEVER THERE WERE NEGATIVE ASPECTS ALSO: (A) VIOLENCE HAD NOT DECLINED; (B) THERE IS NO NEW FOREIGN

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PAGE 02 BUENOS 02303 292327Z

INVESTMENT; AND (C) AGRICULTURAL SECTOR SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN

FORGOTTEN IN ECONOMIC PLANS.

4. PERON REPLIED WITH USUAL LINE THAT EVERYTHING POSSIBLE
WITHIN NORMAL FRAMEWORK BEING DONE TO COMBAT TERRORISM, BUT
THAT STATE OF SIEGE OR OTHER MEASURES WHICH MIGHT INTERFERE
WITH PROGRAMS OF RECONSTRUCTION WOULD BE COUNTERPRODUCTIVE.
ON ABSENCE OF FOREIGN INVESTMENT, HE RATHER LAMELY EXPLAINED
THAT THERE HAD BEEN OFFERS OF FOREIGN INVESTMENT, BUT GOVT WISHED
TO CONSOLIDATE INTERNAL MARKETS AND GUARANTEE PARTICIPATION
OF NATIONAL CAPITAL BEFORE ACCEPTING THEM AT LEAST ACCORDING
TO PRESS REPORTS, PERON DID NOT EVEN TRY TO EXPLAIN WHY AGRICUL-
TURAL SECTOR GIVEN SHORT SHIRT IN PLANNING.

5. DESPITE NEGATIVE NOTES, TONE OF MEETING WAS DESCRIBED
AS EXTREMELY CORDIAL AND PARTY LEADERS SUBSEQUENTLY PRONOUNCED
WHOLE EXERCISE VERY POSITIVE. IT WAS DECIDED TO HOLD SIMILAR
MEETINGS ON REGULAR BASIS ONCE EVERY MONTH.

6. OF POSSIBLE SIGNIFICANCE WAS FACT THAT NEITHER PERON NOR
ANY OF HIS INTERLOCUTORS RAISED QUESTION OF HIS RUMORED TRIP
ABROAD. PERON HIMSELF APPEARED TO BE IN GOOD HEALTH AND SPRITS.

7. COMMENT: IT IS HEALTHY SIGN THAT MECHANISM OF CONSTRUCTIVE
SELF-CRITICISM IS DEVELOPING IN FREJULI AND THAT LEADERS OF
NON-PERONIST PARTIES ARE BEGINNING TO QUESTION SOME OF GOVT'S
POLICIES. SHOULD PERON BE ENTIRELY DEPENDENT ON VIEWS AND ADVICE
OF MEMBERS OF PALACE GUARD SUCH AS LOPEZ REGA, THERE WOULD BE
LITTLE CHANCE THAT GOVT MIGHT BEGIN TO TAKE CORRECTIVE MEASURES
WITH RESPECT TO SOME OF ITS MISTAKEN POLICIES.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptoning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESIDENT, ECONOMIC CONDITIONS, POLITICAL LEADERS, OPPOSITION PARTIES, MEETINGS, POLITICAL SITUATION, FOREIGN INVESTMENTS, AGRICULTURAL PROGRAMS, U NCONVENTIONAL WARFARE
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 29 MAR 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: golinofr
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974BUENOS02303
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740070-0740
From: BUENOS AIRES
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t1974035/aaaaaaedp.tel
Line Count: 91
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: golinofr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 04 SEP 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <04 SEP 2002 by boyleja>; APPROVED <08 JAN 2003 by golinofr>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PERON MEETS WITH FREJULI LEADERS
TAGS: PINT, AR, (PERON, JUAN)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005